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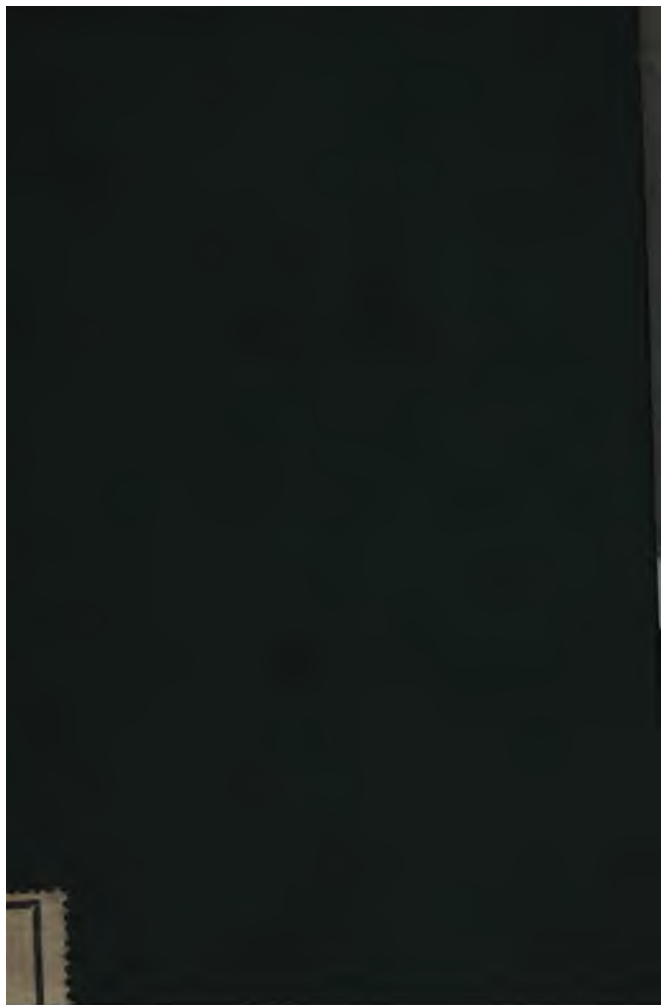
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JOY AND PEACE

IN BELIEVING.

4

JOY AND PEACE

IN BELIEVING;

OR,

HINTS FOR OBTAINING THIS
BLESSING.

LONDON :
JAMES NISBET AND CO. BERNERS STREET.

MDCCCXXXVII.

12681 f. 9



JOY AND PEACE

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OR,





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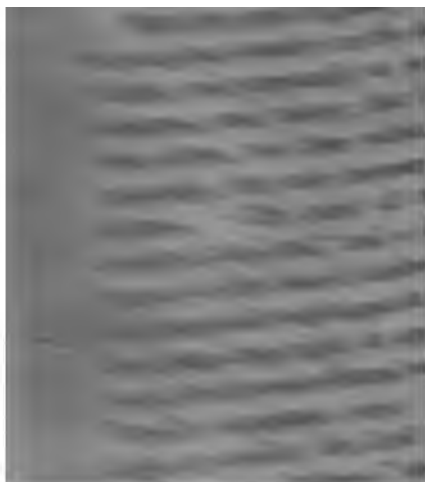
MY DEAR FRIEND,

You still write in depression of spirit. Alas, how I wish that I could comfort you ! Most tenderly and deeply do I feel for you, and it is my constant prayer that your mourning sighs may soon be exchanged for songs of praise. It is however, delightful to reflect that you *have* a friend who can both sympathize with you, and richly comfort you, whose blessed office it is, to “bind up the broken hearted,” “to comfort all that mourn,” and to give “the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.”

What, then, is the only effectual way of obtaining comfort ? It is, be assured, to acquire by the teaching of God’s Holy Spirit, an ever-increasing, experimental

our knowledge of God, and
our Lord." Nay I am almost
that all our sorrow, our doubts,
arise from defective, cloudy view
of Lord Jesus Christ. Could we see
he is, so able, so willing to suffer
to the uttermost, so full of love to
us, so wretched, the most unworthy,
suffering to the most provoking
degree, no other feeling would be swell
in admiration of his goodness,
should be constrained to trust in
his love him, and devotedly to obey
him. It appears to me, that the whole of

while, at the same time, it would so convince him of the yearning compassion,—the melting pity—the overflowing love of the Saviour,—that instead of feeling paralyzed by guilt, and sinking into despondency, he would be compelled to arise, and devote himself to that adorable Being who so loved him. Let us then, my beloved friend, be more simple in our prayers, more simple in our object. Let our supplications,—our reading,—our meditations,—all have this one end in view—a clearer, deeper knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us fix the eye of our mind so steadily upon him, that we may see but little else; and while our souls are thus waiting, watching, longing for the revelation of his glory, we shall assuredly see the cloud that now conceals him from our view begin to break away,—till at length it shall be wholly dissipated, and the Light of the world, the “Sun of Righteousness,” shall fully shine into our



light;" and if instead of despondingly poring over the dark recesses of sin, we were prayerfully to meditate on some passage of our blessed Saviour's history, we should soon have reason to exclaim, "God is the Lord who hath shewed *me* light," and we should then most ardently desire to be bound as a "living sacrifice" to the "horns of his altar," with the holy "cords" of gratitude and love. *

I know, my dear friend, the absolute need of self-examination : but the interrogating of conscience as in the presence of God, previous to confession and prayer, is altogether a distinct exercise of the soul from the one I am now considering.

I am persuaded that our views of the Lord Jesus Christ are *indistinct* ; and that this will in a great measure account for the dulness of our minds, and the coldness of our spirits. We hear of his history as of a tale that is told ; and we feel that there is a

present, and consequently, the
impression made upon our minds is more than
of a picture, than of a living reality.
I do not seem to have seen him,—to
have heard him, to have walked with him
in my eyes; and yet, a deeper meditation
of every incident recorded, would doubtless
to some degree produce this feeling.

It is a remarkable fact, that *every*
petition for help to our Lord when
in distress, succeeded; while every thing
that was said, was intended to encourage
him to come to him, with the sure

word and in his actions. “ Evil communications corrupt ;” and by thus holding communion with our unbelieving hearts, we are estranged from Christ our Saviour, instead of being drawn to him, and conversing *with him*. Oh, if we were but determined to break through every opposing barrier, and casting ourselves at his feet, to pour out our hearts before him, we should oftener hear him speak to us the words of mercy, forgiveness, and love ; while we should be constrained to reply, in the language of gratitude, adoring dependence, and praise.

What could the Lord do more to inspire our confidence and excite our praise ? When he walked upon the earth as God manifest in man, he heard, and accepted every prayer,—he relieved every want,—he soothed every sorrow,—he pitied every distress ; and yet, we will not trust in him ; we will not believe in his love to *us* ; we will

Nothing gives such activity to the soul as a spirit of praise. If we wish to realize the truth of that beautiful promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary—they shall walk and not faint;" we must obtain a spirit of praise and thanksgiving. It is this, and this alone, which causes the soul to mount up with wings as eagles. When a fervent spirit of praise has been excited in the soul, it can no longer stay on earth; the Divine Spirit takes it as it were on his holy wings, bears it up to the throne of God, and lays it at the feet, and sometimes even in the bosom of Christ. It is not wonderful then, my beloved friend, that our great enemy should endeavour, in every possible way, to prevent our obtaining this blessed spirit of praise. "We are not ignorant of his devices." Hence, he is ever seeking to cloud our

...after the stupendous,
proof of it to which our Sa
refers us, John xv. 13. A
take a review of the past,
individual history, it seems
possible to doubt that love
patiently borne with such in
which has so tenderly watche
forgetfulness—which has heal
ness, and assuaged the sor
being who cannot trust him,—
checked in sin, and strengthe
tation,—which has allured by
and stimulated by every

still strive in our hearts? why is the gate of heaven still set open before us, if the Lord be not willing and desirous that we should enter there? Oh! my beloved friend, as we love our souls, and as we wish for heaven, let us guard against despondency: it unnerves the the soul—it chills the affections—it clouds the mind—it dishonours God. We shall never be active, zealous, devoted Christians, till we are happy in God; we shall never be happy in God while we give way to despondency. God our Saviour might well address us in these words, “What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth” the fruits of praise, and thanksgiving, and joy, brought it forth the poisonous weeds of doubt, and distrust, and unbelief? Oh! my friend, despondency, if indulged, will prove as night-shade to the soul—then root it out;

dictate deeply upon what is real
Saviour's human life, we see
matter of encouragement from
words and actions, that on a whole
seem calculated to have a contrary
have been much struck with
this remark as respects the story
man of Canaan. I never felt such
the explanation usually given of
conduct to her. There always
to me something so harsh, so
Lord's answers, something so
with his usual condescending
that my mind was r

people to persevere in prayer. Doubtless, this is the grand lesson to be learnt from the story, but this does not soothe our Lord's rebuke, or soften his expressions. Hence, this beautiful little narrative never came home to me with that healing power which it has afforded to many. I was meditating on it one day, when it struck me, that the whole story exquisitely described the state of a Christian during his days of trial. This thought was the key which unlocked to *me* the rich treasure of comfort contained in this short, but deeply interesting passage of the word of God. It explained fully our Lord's answers: love and the most tender mercy again breathed in every word; and the Saviour again appeared in all his touching sympathy and goodness. As man, he saw only the poor suffering woman of Canaan; but as God, he beheld the tears, the bursting sighs of all his afflicted ones to the end of the world, and he wished to prove that he "knew

or sorrows," by anticipating and delineating the exercises of their minds when laid down by depression and trial.

and when do we most earnestly "cry for mercy?" When we are most "grievously vexed" by the devil,—when the darts of the wicked one are cast in quick succession at our souls, and we seem to have no "shield" interposed to protect them,—when the "prince of the air" stirs up a mighty tempest around and within, and we feel in

the shore been left, when clouds and mists obscure the heavenly ray which had lured it on. The stormy wind of temptation arises; the billows of corruption begin to roll; and the earnest cry for mercy arises from the tempest-tossed spirit. The cry is earnest,—is fervent;—yet Jesus answers not a word: the tempest is unabated, the storm unhushed. What then is the language of the soul? “Ah, I am not a child of God! and Jesus is not sent to me. He hears the cry of his children; but I belong not to that blessed number, and a “cloud” of sin “covers my prayer,” that it cannot rise to heaven. He is merciful to the house of Israel, to his own dear people: he relieves their wants, strengthens their weakness, comforts their sorrows, subdues their sin, and hears their prayers; but I cannot expect him to do all this for an outcast like myself. Alas! what would I not give to possess an interest in such a Saviour! but he is not sent to me.” Yet

me, that we must find ac
The Spirit purchased by the
hath been given to it ; and
Spirit of grace and suppli
xii. 10. It is never silent ;
of God speaking to and in
that voice must be heard on
whatever may be the temp
ragement in prayer, the soul
relief in renewed applications
of grace. The very cont
what Jesus is to *his people*
more fervent desire for an int
rich blessings ; and again f
the mercy seat, it sends forth
heart-felt cry of " Lord hea

and humility, patience, and hope, have not yet been sufficiently strengthened, and therefore they must be further exercised. Instead of the blessed revelation of the Lord Jesus in all his power and willingness to save, the Spirit frequently casts a stronger light on the dark recesses of sin. More of the innate depravity of the soul is manifested;—more vivid remembrances of past guilt are given;—more of the awful nature of sin is revealed; and the soul is made to feel itself so unworthy, so unholy, so grovelling, so vile, that it is compelled to confess, that “it is not meet” to ask God to love so polluted a thing;—“it is not meet” to ask him to feed so depraved a being with the “Living Bread” which came down from heaven; and yet,—it cannot keep from the throne. Again, falling at the feet of Jesus, it ingenuously owns its past and present guilt. It meekly says “Truth,” to all the accusations of Satan,—to the

proofs of the Spirit, and to the censures
the word of God: but still, its mouth
filled with arguments,—with pleas for
mercy, to that God, who “makes his sun
shine upon the evil and the good,” and
“sendeth rain upon the just and the
unjust;” above all, to that God, who when
we were *enemies*, reconciled us to himself
by the death of his only and dearly be-
loved Son! It has been observed by a holy
man, that wherever God gives his love,
he also gives a spirit of persevering
faith; and that to such a soul the way

is rebuked,—then the kiss of peace is given,—then, rejoicing in the light of his countenance, and embraced in the arms of his mercy, the soul has a foretaste of heaven, and the haven of eternal rest already seems in view. And thus it will ever be to the humble, praying Christian ; and with such blessed encouragement “to pray, and not to faint,” can we suffer our hands to hang down, and our hearts to despond ? No ; let the idea that Christ’s eye is fixed upon us, animate us to imitate the woman of Canaan,—to trust in his mercy,—to believe in his love, and to look for a smile from that gracious countenance, though now it seem to be turned away from us.

It may tend to enlarge our conceptions of that bliss, which is in store for the children of God, when we reflect, that the greatest comfort, the sweetest peace, and the brightest hope enjoyed by them on

least his own throughout
shall eat, and drink at n
kingdom." Then shall eve
than satisfied; for every 1
enlarged by Almighty pow
affection shall be filled by .
God shall not only be arou
us ; and each shall then le
experience, what it is to be
the fulness of God:" whi
together with the closest l
pathy and love, the rejoy
shall form one vast templ
"habitation of G . . .

the perpetual enlargement of the soul to receive more and more of his influences, more bliss continually will be poured in; ever renewing the songs of rapturous praise.

If solitude should ever be sought in the bowers above, a temporary absence from that rejoicing multitude, surely it will be to muse the more intensely on the past; that even the brightness of the present glory may be heightened, by contrasting it with the dark shadows of time; that the rest of heaven may even seem still more sweet, by comparing it with the toils and labours of the weary pilgrimage on earth:—and how will such a review cause the soul to swell with gratitude, as it dwells with amazement and wonder on that surpassing love, which taught its wandering feet to reach that blest abode! —But no,—not even on such occasions will there be solitude in heaven; at such a

have not yet attained that b
the dark waters of Jordan
tween us. We are still in th
world, surrounded by danger,
and trial, and we want enco
trust in the love of that gra
who hath declared, "he tha
• *trust* in me, SHALL possess th
SHALL inherit my holy mount
encouragement we may find in
of his divine word, if we read
unprejudiced mind, and pray
Let us then, dearest, turn to
and see what comfort you

We are perfectly convinced, that when the Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross, and thus offered himself up, as a victim to the justice of Almighty God, he made a full, perfect, and sufficient atonement for the sins of the whole world. We are equally convinced, that by his perfect fulfilment of the holy law of God, the Lord Jesus has wrought out so spotless a righteousness, that it gives to the believer a title to the kingdom of glory, God graciously enabling him to "lay hold" of it by faith, and condescending to impute it to him as his own. We also believe, that, purchased by the blood of the Son of God, the Holy Spirit descends into the hearts of those, who earnestly pray for his divine influence, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that by his mighty energy, he new creates the soul, communicating to it a principle of spiritual life, causing holy affections to spring up in the moral desert, and uprooting by degrees, those poisonous weeds which

fragrance of a vision, ascends to heaven. The scenes wrought by his hand, are incessantly wrought by his care, till fully prepared for glory above, they are transplanted into the paradise of God, to bloom with increased beauty and fragrance under the shining of the "Sun of Righteousness."

Of all these blessed truths I am deeply convinced, and therefore do not at present turn to the Scriptures to have them confirmed. What I especially to know is, whether I

we may lay hold of the Saviour's righteousness, and depend upon the Spirit as *our* sanctifier? To solve these doubts, and to answer these important questions, let us turn to the messages which the Most High God hath sent us; but let us *simply* receive them, without adding any of our own reasonings to them. And O! may the divine Comforter, bring them home with great power to our hearts!—Dearest, this is written after *earnest* prayer. Oh! read it with prayer! As we are searching for encouragement to trust in the mercy and love of God, we will first turn to the broadest invitations, and the most unlimited assurances of welcome from the Lord our Saviour.

“Look unto me, and be ye saved *all* the ends of the earth; for I am God.” “I will seek that which was *lost*, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and

FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COME
to save that which was *lost*.”
shall call on the name of the
be saved.” “Ho, *every one* that
come ye to the waters, and
no money ; come ye, buy, and
come, buy wine and milk without
and without price.” “Incline
and *come* unto me : hear, and ye
live.” “And the *Spirit* and the
Come. And let him that is
Come. And let him that is
And *whosoever will*, let him take
of life *freely*.” “This is a fai

the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ; but that the wicked turn from his way, and live ; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways : for why will ye die.” “ Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord ; and I will heal him.”

Is it not impossible to read these messages, sent to us by God, without feeling that *we* are invited to participate in all the rich blessings of the gospel. The *last* charge of our Lord to his apostles, before he ascended to his glorious heaven, was, to “preach the gospel to *every creature*,” and therefore you, and I, are permitted to receive it, as addressed to ourselves ; and surely, if we had been privileged to word the invitations, so as to afford us the greatest encouragement, we could not have made them more free, more full, more unlimited. They are unrestricted by any condition ; and addressed to *all*, without any reference

Such mercy, such love from a God, is indeed most wondrous and astonishing! But shall the great kindness make us doubt it? as to all our other sins, that of ingratitude to our gracious God by disbelieving God forbid. Rather let us with humility of soul "lay hold" on the hand which is now stretched out for forgiveness and peace; and because "he calleth *us*," to his kingdom let us with deep self-abasement and lively faith, commit our souls to his merciful care with the confidence

sages of mercy and forgiveness. He knows the suspicious, doubting nature of the guilty heart; and how difficult it is for a sinner awakened to feel his danger, enlightened to see his sin, and made sensible of the claims of his holy Lord God,—how difficult it is for such an one to *lay hold* of his mercy, and believe in his love; and, therefore, with his own gracious condescension, he draws a picture of what sin is in his sight; from which degraded as we are, we yet turn away with loathing. But the Lord describes the sinner at his worst state, and adds, “*Thou refusedst to be ashamed.*” And how does he endeavour to melt the hardness of such a heart? By sending the most endearing message of mercy! It would have been much indeed had he simply given such a being permission to fall at his footstool and to sue for mercy with all the shame and agony of a condemned criminal:—but what is the message of God? “Wilt thou

than to own that endearing re-
which the trembling sinner dares not
even in the name of Jesus, and
to be the all-wise, the all-gracious
almighty guide, who will conduct
one safely in the path of life? "G
gracious is the Lord: therefore
teach sinners in the way." Yet,
these gracious words available to t
fort of all, he again describes the c
of the sinner he has found, a
the usual word demanding deep a
adds, "Behold, thou hast *spo*
done evil things as thou couldst
then follows another message of
"and I said. *after* she had

case of deeper guilt, and of greater hopelessness,—the case of those who have been instructed in the love of God, and have been blest with the example of Christian friends, who for a while seemed walking in the same blessed path, but who from unwatchfulness, and unprayerfulness, have declined in their souls, and have not acted up to the light they have received ; and a message of tender mercy is sent even to them ; “ Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord.” Such may well be depressed with the feeling, that they have in a peculiar manner done despite to the Spirit of grace, that they have especially grieved the Lord who bought them from death with his blood. In a peculiarly painful manner they have dishonoured his service ; for they have proved by their conduct, that they do not consider it sufficient to make them happy ! And must not such a Master, so “ rich ” in blessings to “ all that call upon him,” feel particularly slighted, and

ed, by so ungrateful and so ungracious
turn for all his goodness ? Undoubtedly
must : yet still he yearns with compas
over the perishing soul ; he knows the
antage which Satan will take in this
of darkness ; how he will draw such a
acter of God, as suits his own despairing
t ; how he will direct the sinner's eye
e holiness of the Most High, while he
s to shroud the light of his love, and
iving mercy ; and therefore, he not only
ares the way for the sorrowing one to

looks within, instead of to heaven ; and re-traces the past, instead of dwelling in humility and faith upon the future. It argues, and doubts in a manner in which our gracious God has anticipated, “ But I said *how* shall I put *thee* among the *children*, and give *thee* a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations ? ” Is not this just the language of a desponding sinner ? “ Oh ! it would be presumption for so ungrateful, so depraved a being as myself to hope to be put among the beloved and dutiful children of the most holy God ! And how does the Lord meet this objection ? By removing the difficulty and promising *freely* to bestow the loving, dutiful spirit of adoption ; “ Thou shalt call me, *My Father* ; and shalt not turn away from me.” And then he repeats his gracious invitation, “ Return ye backsliding children, and *I* will *heal* your backslidings.” Even the desponding, sin-convinced, and doubting sinner is at length overcome by such graciousness,

we not suffer this ~~same~~
written for our instruction,* to p
same happy effect upon us, and
to the mercy seat, with the same
on our lips, and the same feelin
confidence in our hearts?

But the Lord has not been
even with all this. He knows th
hope—the blessed effect of true
love,—and therefore, for the
ment of ALL, he has caused t
be recorded in his word, whic
to inspire hope in the m

The first case is that of Manasseh ; and it is one of most aggravated wickedness. Few persons have been born under happier auspices, or in circumstances more favorable to early piety than Manasseh. His excellent father had restored, in all their holy and imposing solemnity, the long neglected services of the temple. A peculiar blessing from heaven had attended his first celebration of the Passover. We are told that numbers even in Israel, “ humbled themselves,” and returned to seek the God of their fathers ; and that, “ In Judah the hand of God, was to give them one heart ;” so that Hezekiah rejoiced, when he saw how the Lord “ had prepared the people.” “ A great number of priests also, sanctified themselves,” and the “ Levites were even more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests ;” “ and they arose, and blessed the people, and their voice was *heard*, and their prayer came up to his holy place,

their allegiance to his family, and were apparently given up to idolatry. Manasseh had more than his father to instruct him in the things of God. He had the heaven-inspired Isaiah, whose words had been touched with a "live coal off the altar," and whose eye had "seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

With these great advantages, it would have been a sad proof of ingratitude and hardness of heart, had the young king been only lukewarm in the service of God, who had so blest his father.

again the high places, which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalam and made groves." And as if that were not enough, he set up idolatrous altars even in the two courts of the house of the Lord. He then proceeded to murder his own children in the most cruel manner, and publicly sacrificed them to devils. Indeed he proved to all his people, that he gloried in his alliance with the demons of darkness, by seeking to hold communion with them in every possible way ; " He used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards." We can scarcely fancy any wickedness, any impiety going beyond this. But Manasseh was in close league with the hateful enemy of the most high God, and that evil spirit readily suggested a more daring deed, a more awful insult to the King of heaven !

The Lord of hosts had condescended to

accordingly, an idol was made, and
into the *house of the Lord*; and
people, his highly-favoured and
people, had so lately offered him
of penitent prayer and heartfelt
there, did Manasseh cause them to
to the carved image which he had
Oh! the wonderful patience, the
forbearance of the Lord our God
wonder that (as in the case of U
leprosy does not rise up in his face
that the thunderbolt does not smite
awful transgressor to the bar of hell

doubtless, many others also, who continued faithful to their God, for it is said, "He shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another." The Lord then brought upon him the enemies he had threatened, and the host of the king of Assyria, carried him bound as a captive to Babylon. What must then have been the reflections of the fettered king of Judah ! In loneliness and in darkness, he was compelled to reflect. The awful fulfilment of the last message sent him by his justly offended God, must have proved to him the mighty power of Jehovah, that he was truly the God of the whole earth, and that his threatenings are not to be despised. Then must all the awful past have arisen in dreadful array before him ; "he had seduced the Lord's people to sin more than the heathen !" The demon of darkness, that he had so fearfully sought, was with him in this dreadful hour, to lash him into madness

...in which it was
it was a ray from heaven, and it
of *hope*. Why had he not been
Why was his life prolonged?
mighty arm that had hurled him
throne, might have cast him into
of eternal destruction. And, doubtless,
days of childhood returned to him
and he recalled all that he had known of
graciousness, and mercy, and love
mighty God to all who put their trust in him.
Then Manasseh was encouraged
then the blessed ray that had shined from
the mercy-seat, became brighter,
hope increased, his contrition and
deepened; "He *humbled* himself

him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom." Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.⁷⁶ Now, dearest, why was this written? "That *we* through comfort of the Scriptures might have HOPE."

The other case is that of a grievous backslider. To enter in any degree into the peculiar ingratitude which stamped David's sad departure from his God, we must dwell on every page of his history ; we must meditate on the wondrous goodness which had followed him all the days of his life ; and the review of which so often caused his heart to swell with praise and rapturous thanksgiving.

In the hour of danger and difficulty his mighty God had ever been near to defend and direct him : in the hour of trial and sorrow his *gracious* God had ever drawn near to comfort and cheer him. When hunted as a partridge on the mountains, and apparently forsaken by man, the desolate

earth; the desert was light
glory, and filled with the
faithful God, whose foot
delighted to trace, and who
his creatures was manifest
him. Who can read Ps
lxxxiv. without feeling, that
and in solitude, David was
voured servant of the Most
more than this; who can tell
ture that filled his soul when
prophecy unfolded to him
of Messiah's kingdom, and
was revealed to him as David
may in some little detail
the

of the goodness of his God, he called upon all his people “to give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his name, to *remember* the marvellous works that he had done,” to “give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, and to worship him in the *beauty of holiness*.” It was after this that the Lord his God sent him so gracious a message, that David was overpowered by his undeserved goodness and kindness. He was constrained to arise and go to the house of his God, where with astonishment and praise, he reminded the Lord of his own promises, and with adoring gratitude dwelt upon the wondrous love that had been shewn him. Oh! who then can describe the manner in which David must have grieved the Holy Spirit by his sad and dreadful fall! Evidently he had previously greatly declined in his zeal and devotedness to his great Benefactor; for we find that, instead of leading the hosts of ~~Israel~~ Israel against the enemies of the

and how fearfully does one sin
another. Yet we hear of no penitence,
no sense of guilt. The spirit of darkness
so clouded his mind and benighted his
conscience, that all was awful
spiritual stupor: the light of truth
been withdrawn, and he was
in the vapours of sin, and enveloped in
thick mists of unbelief. Oh!
mercy, the graciousness of God
sought not his guilty sin-stained soul,
left him not in the sleep of death,
his prophet to arouse and awaken him,
and when the charge of guilt was laid

turning spiritual life, David was fully awakened to see his guilt in all its fearful extent; when all the benefits,—the goodness,—the sweet and intimate communion he had been permitted to enjoy with his God, came bursting on his memory? And then, would the foul dishonour, the base ingratitude with which he had repaid that gracious God, come with the sickness of death over his soul! Doubtless he was overwhelmed with “a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.”

We may gather from the words, so few and yet so full, that burst in anguish from his heart, that these were indeed his feelings; “I have sinned against the LORD.” And that Lord, who read the agony of his soul with a compassion only divine, immediately comforted him with an assurance of forgiveness,—and thus he was strengthened to hear the sad consequences that would result from his sin.

Now, why was this related? The fact that a man so highly favoured by the God of Heaven, has furnished many a scoff to the unbeliever, and many a jest to the blasphemer, was written, because the tears of the penitent, and the sighs of a spirit wounded by a sense of sin, are precious in the sight of the Lord of Hosts, and because He graciously wishes to inspire such with the same, that they may immediately return to the mercy seat.

But it is not only in these instances

of his own most gracious image ; and thus we shall be sweetly drawn to trust in his mercy and *believe* in his love. We know so very little of God, because we do not thus study him that we might really become acquainted with him. We suffer our own evil and unbelieving hearts to draw a picture of Him, on which we look, instead of fixing our eye intently on the one portrayed by his own divine Spirit. The argument of encouragement drawn from the gracious character of God, we should feel to be irresistible every day of our life. If we were plunged into circumstances of great difficulty and distress, and there were a person in our neighbourhood of great influence and authority who could effectually assist us, but with whom we were utterly unacquainted, how industriously would we seek to inform ourselves of his character ; and if it were one of great generosity and liberal

long suffering which the Lord
our wretched race from the fall
of the fall. Though a holy
hating God, yet does his
forbearance and tender pity fo
ner break forth in gleams of
every page of man's dark hi
we not see the graciousness of
character appear, in his immedi
ing the terror of our first pare
he so unexpectedly, changed
and awful anticipations of
praise and thanksgiving, for so
and undeserved a deliverance

by which a sinner can draw near to the mercy-seat,—by the blood of atonement. Was there not also tender compassion shewn in suffering that awful, unknown, dreadful evil, death, to take its first victim from the family of God, that thus our first parents might be comforted while viewing their own fearful deed, with the thought that their lost one was taken to the bosom of Christ, and rejoicing in the paradise of God? And “when *all* flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth” and “God saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was *only evil*,” when the whole world was one awful scene of abomination and bloodshed, and the Lord resolved to take such sinners from the “earth which they defiled,”—oh ! how did his divine compassion shine forth, in causing his Spirit* to strive with, to

* 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19.

who loved him and called
name. Nor can we read
of the care which he took
family, without feeling how
cious is our God.

Even those things which appear
be rather hard requirements,
will be found proofs of love,
calling of Abraham from his
kindred, and father's house.
ration from his idolatrous re-
be absolutely necessary for
vation of Abraham's faith.
less saved him from far more
and temptations than

by which no doubt he was prepared for those richer blessings which were in store for him. And when the faith of his servant was weak, and he could not trust the God that had been his guide, and guardian, and "Friend," yet how did that gracious God watch over his happiness, and restore him the wife that he loved. We shrink from the trial imposed on Abraham, in the command to sacrifice his only child ; yet, surely, it was not only to try his faith, and test his obedience, that the Lord gave that command ; infinite love to Abraham's soul may be discovered even here.

We must not forget, that the God who appointed the trial, communicated grace proportionate to it. The apostle tells us that Abraham was comforted with the full assurance that God would restore him his Isaac ; and this will account for his words to the young men at parting. But could Abraham ever forget the feelings with which

WHILE to slay his son?"
heaven forbad the deed
of agony, and the tears
quickly exchanged for song
when the awful hour of thi
ment came,—when the Lo
the sword of retributive j
own almighty hand—thou
his son, his only son—"whom his soul delighted,"
agony, at his feet, yet he w
till he had plunged it into t
"beloved one." To Abrahah
by the Lord the

his mind by the scene, we may gather from his words, "The Lord will provide." Doubtless he looked beyond the "ram caught in the thicket," even to the spotless Son of God, who was to be offered upon that same mountain, as an atoning sacrifice "for the sins of the whole world."

In every incident of Abraham's history, the graciousness of the divine character beautifully appears, and especially in all the circumstances connected with Isaac's domestic happiness ; and, after the interesting relation has been given, how touching is the conclusion ; "And Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

But, probably, in no instance is the condescending compassion and kindness of God more strongly exemplified than in the history of Jacob. It is difficult to conceive more melancholy circumstances than those in

how deeply he felt this separation he loved, is affectingly shewn emotion at meeting one, in son connected with his family. But must have weighed on Jacob that of parting from his kind offended his God ; he had y belief, and presumptuously his own hands, the fulfilment promises. As he lay down with the earth for his bed, and his pillow, the darkness and the desert around, must have picture of his mind : though loved home, of his aged

have felt himself an exile from home, and from heaven !

It was an hour of deep suffering, and sorrow,—but it was the hour in which his gracious God drew near. How condescending the revelation,—how comforting the promises,—and how changed the scene by the presence of God ! The gloomy wilderness became the house of God, the solitary desert the gate of heaven !

And when did the Lord again especially manifest himself to Jacob ?—Upon his return to his native land, in a season of sore anxiety, and great distress. He had sent his beloved family over the brook, while he himself remained in darkness and in solitude, to make earnest supplication to the Lord God of his father. His present danger reminded him of his past transgression, and he was constrained to acknow-

all his promises. And how
that gracious God draw near
them ! and how abundant were
solations he poured into the
penitent, and believing servant
emphatically added, that as
over Penuel, the sun rose upon
a brighter sun had shed his
his spirit.

And when in the decline of
necessary to purify Israel's soul
tion ; to wean him from his
attachment for the image of
Rachel in her son, how gently
done ; and how tenderly during

he “refused to be comforted,” and when he bitterly exclaimed, “all these things are against me ;” yet, in fact, all those trying dispensations were *for* him ; and as soon as Israel’s soul was bowed in submission to the will of God ;—as soon as he was made meet to enjoy the blessing without endangering his eternal interests, it was restored to him, enriched a hundred fold. The touching manner in which the re-union of Jacob and Joseph is dwelt on, must prove to every heart the tender interest which the Lord took, even in the temporal happiness of the aged Patriarch.

The peculiar manner in which Moses was prepared to be the deliverer, and leader of his people, conveys the same lesson. How does the graciousness of our God appear in so exactly qualifying him for the high office to which he was destined. His instruction in all the wisdom

and removed his objections,—and
very anger which he manifested
continued unbelief, and which
overcame his unwillingness to
the glorious service to which
called, all prove the gracious c
sion, and tender regard of the
Hosts for his people. And how
does this appear in the first inci
is recorded, upon the Israelite
Egypt. They were brought into
stances of great peril, and a
hopeless distress : and why was th
teach them in the most impressive
to *rely* on the *power*, and *belie*

of their pilgrimage? Had they duly learnt it, they would soon have reached the happy land in prosperity and peace. But they *limited* the Holy One of Israel; they would not rely on his power; they would not believe in his love! *Many*, many times turned he his anger away: but they grieved his Spirit; they insulted his Majesty: they even thought scorn of the pleasant land to which he was leading them; till at length he was constrained by their dark unbelief, to “swear in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest.” Who can read the 106th Psalm and not feel that our God is gracious, and long-suffering and merciful?

And though for infinitely wise reasons, the Lord did not grant the prayer of his faithful Moses, and suffer him to lead the hosts of Israel into the promised land; yet how does his condescending kindness appear in the last scene that is recorded

...the leader of Isra
Canaan was only a type,
Yet his servant had ear
see this type of his glori
must be indulged. And
desire accomplished? Th
descended from heaven to
Alone, on the mountain whi
the glorious view, Moses v
sensible of the presence of
of his gracious God, who c
strengthened the eye of hi
vant, to discern the gloriou
had prepared for him -

blessed land in which was his own portion. How sweetly was Moses thus prepared on the heights of Pisgah, for the hill of Zion.

But probably not even Moses himself had been placed in circumstances so painfully anxious, as Joshua, when he was called upon to command the thousands of Israel ; and how the graciousness of God appears, in affording him such immediate, and abundant support and encouragement. For though he had been "magnified" by the Lord, "in the sight of all Israel," by the miraculous passage of Jordan ; still as he viewed the massive walls of Jericho, and thought upon the "mighty men of valour," by whom they were defended, and also upon the armed myriads who so thickly peopled Canaan, and then recalled his own undisciplined host, unused to the terrors of war, and always ready to despond, he must have felt himself almost overcome

to rest from these anxious
left the slumbering host, and “
to inspect the city. The
the thoughts that oppressed
Joshua, and how does his tend
sion, and gracious kindness ap
manner in which he made hin
to him. Perceiving a man sta
him, with a drawn sword in
Joshua boldly “went unto
quiring if he were a friend, o
sary? To which the Lord mos
replied, “As Captain of the
Lord, am I now come.” Th
relieving the mind of his faith
by taking upon himself that a

them, to take possession of the long desired country, when he had destroyed their enemies, and given them rest on every side, how graciously did he warn, and instruct them, alluring them by promises, and alarming them by threatenings, to keep the path of safety and of peace.

Moreover, when they soon so far forgot their Benefactor, as to insult his divine majesty, by worshipping devils, and were necessarily brought into great distress; how does the graciousness of his character repeatedly appear, in again and again raising them up deliverers. Though abusing his goodness, and constantly forgetting his benefits, yet do they pay this homage to the wonderful patience of their gracious God, that they seek him in the hour of distress, and cry to him in the time of trouble "Arise and help us, for vain is the help of man," till at length, being wearied with their continued ingratitude, he refuses to assist

... is grieved for the
and he delivers them !

But who can follow the
mercy ? " who can recount
to his people ? " They a
page, and shine in every
what a character is the ch
God ! So holy that even
are not clean in his sight ;
ciful, so ready to forgive,
entreated, and so patient to
rebellious creatures, whom he
in a moment ! How rich he
honour him, his gifts to So
dantly


down his altars, and slain his prophets," and in every way insulted his Majesty ; yet when startled by the awful message of his justly offended God, Ahab humbled himself, how immediately did the Lord vouchsafe to notice it, and to mitigate the sentence he had passed ! and, doubtless, had it not been a transient humiliation, but a sincere repentance, even Ahab would have found full and free forgiveness.

And when Judah was wholly given up to abomination, and idolatry, when they " would none of his counsel," and would not attend to his reproof, yet how patiently did the Lord bear with their provocations, and continue to send them warning after warning, and prophet after prophet!—How touchingly did he entreat them, " Be instructed, oh ! Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee." " Wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved!" Moreover, when all, all was in

hast spoken unto us in the 1
Lord we will not hearken unt
we will certainly do whate
goeth forth out of our own mo
incense to the queen of heaven
then, when lingering mercy was
compelled to give way to judgm
the Lord express himself of hi
though rebellious, and ungrat
“ I have given the dearly bel
soul, into the hands of her ene

Now is it not impossible to
these manifestations of the gr
God, without feeling the l
towards him ? And why is all t

his providence. Have we never seen him expostulating with hardened sinners? When death has entered a family, have we never seen that member called, who was best prepared for heaven? And have we never seen the glorious Gospel continued in a place which little valued it, while Sabbath after Sabbath, the preacher, the ambassador of heaven, has in vain entreated the inhabitants to turn to their long suffering God, and be saved? Have we never seen the penitent christian graciously delivered from those distresses which were the consequences even of past transgression! while the afflicted christian has been richly comforted, and the darkness of the cloud of trial has only made the rainbow of covenant mercy and love to appear the more conspicuous? And so, for all the footsteps of mercy which we have been tracing, we may still find corresponding mercies in his present daily dispensations.



request when he visibly appeared
his guilty creatures, and abode

In the Lord Jesus Christ we
that great and wonderful Being
longsuffering and kindness we
been dwelling, though the majes
ness, was softened by that more th
sympathy, and compassion, and h
breathed in every word, was ex
every recorded look, and displaye
action of the Lord, our Savio
on earth.

The scattered rays of mercy ar
which light up the old dispensati

Most High before; but those clouds were dissipated, and that darkness was dispelled, by the glorious manifestation of the God of love, in the person of his beloved Son : the “ brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.”

The very coming of the Son of God to this sin-stained earth ; the very purpose for which he came, in deep humiliation to work out for us a justifying righteousness : and to offer himself up, as a sin-offering “ for the sins of the whole world,”—ought so powerfully to speak to the heart of every fallen child of Adam, as to convince the chief of sinners of the Saviour’s willingness to “ save to the very uttermost.”

But indeed we see this willingness most plainly expressed in every incident of our Lord’s history, though Satan uses every endeavour to cloud our minds, that

people. Accessible to all,
them in places of public resort
in him were "hid all the
wisdom, and knowledge,"
cended to teach his ignorant
the most simple manner, illustrating
truths by those natural images
they were most familiar.
too did he manifest his greatness
lead them on in the knowledge
in tenderly speaking the
"as they were *able to bear*"
ing how dead and indiffer-

to himself, as the Physician of the soul, and recalling to their remembrance the glorious descriptions given by their favourite prophet of the Messiah, by fulfilling them before their eyes.

A picture is drawn of the divine Saviour, when thus engaged, which beautifully represents his mission to this world of disease and death, and which ought to encourage every human being to come to him. “ And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea, and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre, and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him, for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said, Blessed are ye poor,

ed, with his own beautiful cr
around !

How deeply he felt such
tears at the grave of Lazarus
loved friend was about to be
his weeping family ; but the S
not witness the ravages of si
in this once happy and still bea
without emotion.

If we had formed part of th
multitude, and had beheld th
objects as they pressed on a

gered, despondingly considering our case? should we not rather with all the strength which *hope* imparts, have forced our way to the Saviour's feet, sweetly assured, that we also should return rejoicing? But, had we been mourning the diseases of the soul; had we been faint with the sickness of sin; oh! what a gleam of heavenly joy would have passed over that divine, yet suffering countenance, as the prayer burst from our lips, and he graciously said to us, as to others so oppressed, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven."

But there is another picture drawn of our Lord, which may even prove more encouraging than this: "And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at the

... the time to walk, a
see ; and they glorified the C
Could any thing give us a
idea of the Saviour's gracio
deportment than this ? The
enough to lay the afflicted on
and bring them beneath his c
eye, for them to obtain imm
Nor did they hope in vain ;
stantly healed.

The many busy feet that
that mountain, have long been
in the grave ; the hum of hu
has long since passed away . .

multitude that no man can number, redeemed to God by his blood. But, though now in glory, his heart is unchanged; "He is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever;" numbers are daily—hourly—coming to his footstool, diseased and wretched, and are sent rejoicing away: and if *we* have but faith to remain there, though we may be speechless from distress, or the dryness* of the soul, yet the prayerful look of want will bring down his blessing, and ensure his help.

And after these days of incessant fatigue, in which he was so unweariedly engaged in doing good, in relieving those oppressed by the Devil, and in "healing every sickness," how does the graciousness of our Lord appear in his nights of prayer. Cold are our hearts, and little do we feel the sufferings of others; yet, have we never visited the sick, the dying, and the sor-

* Isaiah xli. 17, and xliv. 3.


surrounded the whole day by sig
which feebly shadowed forth
state of soul of those around, t
“ rose up a great while before
departed to a mountain to pr
does not love to follow this
mysterious, but all-gracious
he leaves the humble dwell
in which he had allowed hi
human nature a short season
and seeks the solitary mount
communion with the God he s
loved. As he looked back
sleeping city, now hushed to si
thought of the myriads there,
dawning the day of his return

Withdrawn awhile from the oppressive atmosphere of sin in which he daily breathed and lighted with the pure light of his own glorious lamps which he had hung on high, how must the stillness of "earth, air, sea, and sky," of glassy lake and vine-clad hill, have harmonized with the Saviour's spirit, as he enjoyed an earthly communion with the blest above ! And, after one of these seasons of fervent intercourse with heaven, when he was again sought by the people he had so miraculously fed, how does our Lord's tender compassion and love for the soul appear in the gentle, but impressive manner, in which he endeavoured to raise their thoughts and desires above the miracle to the spiritual instruction it was intended to convey. And, when they were offended at his sublime address, and departed from him, oh, how does his graciousness break forth in that sorrowful and touching appeal to the disciples, "Will ye also go away !" We know not how much

understand the love which pa

How gracious and how end
the style of our Lord's preac
affectingly learn from the ma
it subdued and melted the
"woman that was a sinner
doubtless, been mingled in t
witnessed the miracles, and l
words of the Saviour, afte
ceived the messengers of Joh
The light, and beauty of l
irradiated the Redeemer,
painfully and powerfully,
polluted state. Yet his wo
led with such looks, and


who had so deeply convinced her of her sin. She could not keep away from that Holy One, who seemed to feel such pity for her lost soul; and taking her little offering, she sought again to enter his presence, though in a Pharisee's house! Oh! who can tell the sorrow that swelled her heart, as the remembrance of past guilt came darkly over her spirit, and almost clouded the hope of pardon that had led her on. Overpowered by the sense and feeling of her sins, she remained behind the Saviour at his feet, not venturing to attract his notice, or present her offering—tremblingly she lingered; probably expecting a mandate to depart, as soon as her polluting presence should be known. The contempt expressed in the countenance of the Pharisee and others, must have increased this apprehension: yet, when the Saviour fixed his eye upon her, it was so full of holy compassion and tender pity, that it melted her very soul. The tears fell fast of contrition



being, she instantly wiped
but instead of meeting the re
dreaded, she saw in the Sav
countenance a gleam of that
felt in heaven over one sinn
eth ; and, overwhelmed by
she could no longer resist th
tions of gratitude and love w
soul, but “ kissed his feet,
them with the ointment she
Oh ! how does the touching
of our Lord appear in every
exquisite story ! in his gentle
with the self-righteous and
Pharisee, whose thoughts he
read.—in his enumeration of s

panied as it was with his own peculiar blessing, “peace” in her soul, and “peace” with heaven. Do we not see the Lord God of Manasseh here !

We have another instance given us of the graciousness of our Lord’s preaching, in the discourse he delivered in the synagogue at Nazareth. He knew the contemptuous unbelief,—the malignant hatred which filled every heart in that assembly, and which burst forth, when, with brutal violence, “They rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.” Yet, when the Lord “stood up for to read,” and, looking round, read all their thoughts, what was the text he selected for his address?—“the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted,—to



the acceptable year of the Lord
when they all intently looked
“he began to say unto them, That
this Scripture fulfilled in your ears
“all wondered at the gracious words
proceeded out of his mouth.” If
congregation the Lord freely and freely
ed himself as a teacher, a deliverer
cian, and a Saviour, may we not be
ed to believe, that he will be gracious
these to the soul that endeavour
him? This gracious willingness to
who come to him, we see most be
exemplified in his taking the long
weary journey to the coasts of
soothe the sorrow and relieve the

Gadarenes, that he might rescue from the powers of darkness, the wretched being whom they kept in madness and misery among the tombs. The Saviour knew the reception he should meet with from the people ; he knew they would immediately desire him to depart from them ; yet, to save one soul, and to restore one human being to comfort and happiness, was a sufficient object for the Redeemer to undertake the voyage.

And even those actions and those words that seem not at first so gracious, on meditation, we shall find have a gracious end, or proceed from a gracious feeling ; such as the destruction of the swine in the lake. Our Lord, whose comprehensive eyes scanned eternity, and who knew how these worldly minded people were bartering their souls for a little earthly gain, was graciously anxious to convince them in a most impressive manner, of the power and fearful

their own dreadful state; that the
of God were urging them on to
destruction, that they might eterna
in the lake which burneth with
brimstone. If any thing could re
from their sinful apathy, surely it
contrasted as it was with the
picture of peace, the lost one sittin
feet of the Saviour, in heavenly tran
and thankful joy. Surely then it
gracious end that our Lord permit
destruction of the swine.

In the same manner we may see
severe language of the Saviour

up the kingdom of heaven against men : they neither went in themselves, neither suffered they them that were entering to go in." Surely we must see in this holy indignation a gracious desire for the salvation of the lost.

Amidst such repeated, and awful manifestations of the power of the Godhead, how encouraging it is to observe the feelings of the manhood continually appearing in our Lord's history. We have a touching instance of this in his conduct after the death of John the Baptist. When peculiarly wounded in feeling, and sad in heart, have we never felt constrained to seek refuge in prayer and in solitude? these feelings may help us to understand why the Saviour, after being told of his beloved servant's violent death, "departed" immediately "by ship unto a desert place apart." Doubtless, as God, he had been with John in the lonely prison, warming

cell with gleams of light from
heaven. And as the hour of
entrance there, doubtless the
unchanging God more full
glorious crown that was a
trydom ; but, as *man*, the
not hear of his beloved servant
out emotion. He had been
senger to “ prepare his way
world of sin, and misery : and
death awarded him, must
upon the Redeemer’s heart
proof of the black ingratitude
came to seek and save. That
without all human sympathy.

the people followed, and crowded around him ! even at such a time of wounded feeling, and painful emotion, “ he went forth to them, was moved with compassion ” towards them, and “ healed their sick.”

How does the graciousness of our divine master again appear in his treatment of the beloved family at Bethany. Persecuted, derided, scorned, and blasphemed, how must the Saviour’s heart have expanded towards the family that received, and welcomed, and honoured him. We are not left to imagine this : it is beautifully said, “ Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.” How deeply, then, he must have felt the touching message sent him, “ Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick.” They felt it was enough to mention their distress to one who relieved every sickness that was brought before him : and this confidence in his love, and in

ening feeling of despair which
their souls, as they seemed to
in their hour of utmost need.

How deeply the Saviour felt
of their faith, his strong emotion
meeting his afflicted, and he
proclaims. Yet he appeared to
them; he delayed his departure
awful scene was over, till the
sigh had escaped from the lips of
loved Lazarus, and the sob
burst from the bosom of Mary
grave of her brother. And
None felt so exquisitely as
Mary Magdalene had never before

faith of Martha certainly needed to be confirmed; much also might have been wanting in the souls of the others; but, our Lord's eye embraced the case of all his afflicted children, to the end of time; he knew in how many of his loved ones, the trial must be sharp, protracted and apparently hopeless, that faith and patience might have their perfect work; he knew what would be the workings of unbelief, the temptations of Satan, during such an hour of darkness and distress, and therefore, from the grave of his beloved friend, he was willing to call upon them in the most impressive manner, to *trust* him when they could not see him; to "hope, even against hope," that they "might obtain a better resurrection." Oh! is there not gracious kindness and compassion here? The same tender consideration for the feelings of his people, we see in the incident of the widow's mite. Why did our Lord take his place that day, over against the treasury?

apt to wonder, that, as the Lord
Mount Sinai, he does not again
in fire to take vengeance upon
hardened rebels and consume them
moment ! But,—he draws nigh to
and takes his last, earnest, farewell
and that, not a look of vengeance
lingering, sorrowful, and rejected
“ And when he was come near,
the city, and wept over it ! saying
hadst known even thou at least
day, the things which belong to
peace. Oh ! Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
that killest the Prophets and
that are sent unto thee, how often
— and thy children to

ishing goodness, and untiring patience, he had daily entreated the people, “ while they had the light, to believe in the light, that they might be the children of the light,” and had affectingly complained that “ they would not come to him, that they might have life.” There, also,—he had been blasphemed, and insulted, tempted, and derided—there his life had been assailed, and they had impiously accused him of “ having a devil” and of being “ mad !” Yet all this was but a faint picture of those out-breakings of malignant hatred that were about to take place. All the Saviour’s sufferings were fully known to him, all—all were continually before his eyes when he descended into this guilty city, as a lamb going to the slaughter-house. The bitter scorn,—the hardened unbelief,—the thundering cry of “ crucify him, crucify him” from those whose distresses he had so often relieved ; the cruel mockings, and the agonizing

have felt constrained to check t
stop the bursting sigh; lest the
should suffer even more; and
some degree, forgotten our own
the endeavour to cheer, and let
This feeling may faintly enabl
ceive the exquisite tenderness of
last address, to those whom
unto the end." If ever there
for the Saviour to be absorbed
reflections, by his own sufferin
it was this; the night before
death, the night on which the w
God and Father was to be p
without measure on his soul; th

.....


disciples, and saw that their hearts were filled with sorrow ; when he saw his beloved John, after (we may well suppose) wistfully gazing in the Saviour's face, as he spoke of his departure from them, in speechless love and grief, resting his head on his Redeemer's breast ; the Saviour thought not of himself, but in the most touching manner tried to comfort them ; supporting them with those glorious hopes which strengthened his own soul, in this hour of need ; gently reminding them of his life of suffering, and sweetly adding that they ought to rejoice, that those sufferings were soon to be ended, and that he was about to return to that God whom he so inconceivably loved, and from whom he had been in a manner so long separated. Oh ! can we dwell on all this, without feeling encouraged to look to him for comfort in every hour of sorrow, and to trust in his love in every time of trial ?

We see the same wonderful graciousness

the look given to Peter in the palace, which pierced to his very heart, at once extricated him from the grasp of the prince of darkness. And do we see again the same exquisiteness appear, in the especial message to the sorrowing Peter, after the resurrection; our Lord knowing that this self-accusing apostle would desire to include himself in the joy of the resurrection, and being sent to the other disciples. It is vain to attempt to follow all the traces of our Lord's mercy and love, though they are traced in every line of the sacrifice of his earthly life: in the selecti-

manner. And why was all this written? To inspire our confidence, and to brighten and strengthen our *hope*.

And may we not also derive encouragement from the Lord's dealings with *ourselves*?—Have we not seen numbers cut down on the right hand and on the left, and called away to give in their great account, while we are still continued in the land of forgiveness, and with all the means of grace? But, has the Lord only permitted us to live? has he given no light to the soul? has he communicated no life to the spirit? has he brought home no instruction to the heart? Have we never felt his most gracious Spirit striving with us? When we have heard of the love of Jesus, have we never felt a desire, that that love might penetrate and melt *our* hearts? and has no prayer been suggested, for the out-pouring of the divine Spirit to effect this in us? When we have seen the grace of God



the lips in prayer, that we might
adorn the doctrine of God our
Have we never felt willing to give
world, and take our portion as
the people of God? and have
been convinced, that the peace
Saviour gives, is of more value
the riches of this world; and to
his love, and to love him in return
be perfect happiness? And when
not acted up to the light of conscience
have we not felt grieved, and sad?
we not found that under such
stances it was our greatest relief
out our hearts before our forgiveness

we never felt pained, and sorrowful, that it had not been done from a pure, warm love to the Saviour; but that sin, in some manner or other, had marred the offering, and tarnished the service? Can we fix our eyes intently on the worst season of our past history, recall the entire alienation of the heart, the blindness of the mind, the worldliness of the thoughts, the unchecked, perfectly uncontrolled reign of selfishness in the soul, the unholy state of the affections; and comparing this period with the present, after duly inspecting our views, our feelings, our whole condition, can we truly say, that God has done nothing in us, or for us? Oh! my friend, I think not. I think we must be constrained to confess, that he has never, never left us, that he has been teaching, been striving with, and daily warning us. May I not add, been *helping* us? For, have we never resisted any temptation? Have we never overcome one besetting sin? Have we never gained the

have we

any trial, or to give praise for an
Surely, the Lord *hath* helped us,
ere this, have richly comforted
not obstructed our own comfort
then well 'account the long-suffe
Godsalvation.' We may well take
lation of that blessed text 'God h
pointed us to wrath, but to obtai
by our Lord Jesus Christ, who c

And now, dearest, with all
encouragement, what is it wh
courage us? Is it the reme
the past, of our sad transgress
may well humble, but should

past, must convince us that God our Saviour has been leading us to himself; we have seen the free messages of invitation which he has sent us; and that upon coming to him, the black record against us, is blotted out of his book of remembrance; yes,—even those sins which press most heavily upon the conscience, and peculiarly weigh upon the heart, are all freely, fully forgiven. When the soul is enlightened to see in some degree the hatefulness of sin; when the light thus received in the conscience, is reflected upon the past, and makes the darkness, and deformity of our transgressions visible, when they all start up, in fearful array against us, it is difficult to believe, that they are all forgiven, that they are no longer as a dark cloud to intercept the rays of God's love from shining on our souls. And the Lord of hosts has anticipated this difficulty; and therefore, he tries to elevate our minds with high conceptions of his glory, and ma-

adds, that "if heaven above measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath," then, on "cast off" his people "for all they have done." Could any thing more impressive idea of the "depth" of the Lord's work of grace when he exhorts the "*wicked* to turn from his way," and his evil "though he will not return to him, and promises free mercy, and "*abundantly to pardon*." adds, "For as the heavens are above the earth, so, are my ways, higher than your ways, and my thoughts higher than your thoughts." And when he graciously adds the idea of the retri-

iniquities. And after some of his most cheering promises of renewing his divine image on the soul, by writing his laws upon the heart, and freely “forgiving all iniquity,” and remembering our sins no more, knowing how hard it is for a soul struggling with sin, to believe this, he adds, “Thus saith the Lord,” “which *divideth the sea, when the waves thereof roar*, the Lord of hosts is his name:” thus intimating to us, in the most forcible, and beautiful manner, that he could as easily quell, and still the depths of corruption within. Oh ! it is a glorious, and blessed truth, that the blood of Jesus “cleanseth us from *all sin* ;” that, “In him, we have redemption, through his blood, the *forgiveness of sins* ;” that “by him, all that believe are justified from *all things* ;” that he that cometh to Christ is so fully, so entirely forgiven, “that none of his sins that he hath committed, shall be mentioned unto him ;” but that they shall all be

But are you depressed
hardness, and coldness

We may well take shame
we so *little* love One, who
fully loved us, and nothing
convincing proof of our
while we ought to deplore
be discouraged even by the
knows our wretched condition
provided a certain remedy
said," and shall he not do
promised of his own free gift
his own almighty power,
the heart of stone" from
a "heart to *know* him,
Lord:" and that he will

our state, but hath told us, that our "bruise is *incurable*, and our wound is grievous;" that our soul is utterly diseased; that "from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in us: but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores." But, what is his free promises, "Behold, I will bring it health, and cure, and I *will* cure them, and reveal unto them the abundance of peace, and truth;" "and I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me." "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end." The cure promised is certain. We may use all the means of grace in the *full assurance* of faith, that eventually they will be made effectual by his Spirit to the purification of the soul; for "he that hath begun the good work" will complete it. But, if we were in the hands of an able Physician, should we allow our-

with our growth, and strengthen
our strength, occasionally shew
selves? or, because we suffered
languor, and weakness, which
attend deep seated complaints;
not; then why should we act
respect to the soul?

But are we distressed at
which Satan seems to bring
do we tremble at his fierce assault
Lord has anticipated these fears
given most gracious promises to
us: "they shall fight against
shall *not prevail* against thee
with the Lord, to de

him, that contendeth with thee." And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible." And he hath especially declared himself to be the God that "strengtheneth the *spoiled*, against the strong," and that "will bruise Satan under our feet shortly." The victory is thus *assured*, if we keep close to the Captain of our salvation, and firmly grasp the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; but, we must put on *all* that armour, which God hath provided for the warfare.

Or are we discouraged by the continually recurring conflicts with inbred sin, with unholy tempers, earthly affections, and those temptations to which we must be daily exposed from a world entirely alienated from its Maker? We cannot but *feel* these most painfully; yet, we need not be *discouraged* by them. In every struggle

enemy, who keeps his soul
ance with sin. The fi
Abijah ought to be our
seek to follow his exam
were set, in battle array
men, being mighty men
him were only half that n
he dismayed at the sight
raged himself by thinking
God, and in all the confide
claimed to his foes, "Beho
is *with us*, for our capta
against the Lord God of y
ye shall not prosper." And
conflict was begun, "and
back and forth."

shouted, as they thus honoured their ever-present defender: "God smote" their enemies before them, and gave them "into their hand." To confirm the impression that this narration is calculated to make upon our minds, the Divine Spirit has caused another of the same kind to be soon after recorded.

Just as Asa was rejoicing in the rest that had been given him, an immense host, even 1,000,000, with 300 chariots came up, against him: all human aid was utterly vain; but did he therefore give way to desponding fears? He "cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have *no power*; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee." And did the Lord reply to this confidence in his power, this

could not recover themselves
were destroyed before the Lord
his host." We should never
that is written in the word
expressly written for our in-
comfort ; and I think that they
are peculiarly calculated to
gracious end, if we read them
spirit. But if we are depressed
feeling of our weakness ; if
with the continual warfare in
engaged, we are just the persons
the Lord makes one of the most
of his gracious promises, which
duces as usual in the sublime


brightness, and asks the impressive question "who created all these?" The inference alone were comforting; for the God who lighted those lamps of glory, can surely fill our souls with the light of His grace; the mighty God who upholdeth those shining worlds "with the word of His power," can surely, surely uphold the fainting Christian in the path of life: but it is beautifully added, "He giveth *power* to the *faint*; and to them that have *no might* he increaseth strengt h."

But are we cast down because we have *brought ourselves* into circumstances of great trial and distress? Alas! this ought to abase us; but there is the greater need immediately to seek the help and comfort which the Lord is so ready to impart; and therefore we should feel encouraged instantly to seek his gracious assistance in the humble but strong confidence of faith and hope. And to encourage us to this,

The king of Judah had been
God in every way, and on even
in an evil hour this favour
God courted the society, a
friendship of the man that
sulted his Divine benefactor
step rapidly leads to another
himself with Ahab and his
went up with them to war
the consequence of this union
began then to be felt. For
into the most imminent danger
his life ; and doubtless his
the ungodly and loving the
Lord," then flashed upon


circumstances to apply to the Lord with *hope* ; “ for “ the Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.” “ The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth ; He also will hear their cry, and will save them.”

Hitherto, dearest, we have been meditating upon the *encouragement* afforded us, to *hope* in the Lord, and to believe in his love to *us* ; but have we ever considered *hope*, even a *strong* and a *bright* hope, in the light of a positive duty, a clear command, of as much force, and coming with the same authority as all those precepts to which we bow with implicit submission and obedience ? And why is this ? Because the Lord who created the soul, knows the *power* of *hope* ; how it braces and animates every power and every affection ; how it nerves the soul for conflict, and strengthens it in the hour of battle, how it overleaps mountains of diffi-




porting in its influence, than
gives confidence and strength to
rushing to the fiery engagement
patience to the man of deep res
under its influence toils contented
apparently inextricable mazes ;
all the terrors of the ocean ; it
gloomy dungeon ; and,—but it w
attempt to follow its effects ; it pe
classes ; prompts to every enter
essential to every success. And c
be supposed, that in the most d
continued conflict,—in the most
ing enterprise,—in the most dif
search—and across the most ter

“rejoice in hope.” He has made it one of the most important parts of that armour in which we are to fight and conquer. He has made it the anchor, which is to keep the soul surely and steadfastly fixed to the throne of God, on which the Lord our Saviour is sitting, having all power in heaven and earth, to give strength and grace to his people, according to their respective wants and necessities. But is this our idea of *hope*? Is it not usually considered a blessed privilege, which some favoured believers alone enjoy? When they hear of the bright and the strong *hope*, which by anticipation enters heaven; which lays hold of the glorious crown of life; which rejoices in the love of God the Father, and in the perfect work of God the Son; do not many sincere and excellent Christians feel that this state of mind must be indeed most happy and blessed; but that it would be presumption in them to make so sure of such glorious blessings, while there remains



that it is far greater presumption to
to be wiser than the Most High,
rush into the battle with our he
covered, when he has graciously p
for our helmet, "the hope of salv
And the very figures used, imply t
hope is both strong and bright. A
bling hope does not correspond w
idea of an ancient helmet, or w
stability and strength of an ancho
ther would a trembling hope fill th
soul with that rejoicing, with whic
is associated in the command to pos
Such dear Christians do not consid
"hope" brings us "nigh to God;"
..... are brought to Him. At

and heartfelt will be our endeavours to obtain it. We see the effects of hope in worldly enterprises and plans; the stronger the hope, the greater the exertion; whereas if you diminish the hope you immediately diminish the ardour of pursuit, and all is comparatively languid and nerveless. And it is precisely the same in spiritual things. The stronger the hope of a personal interest in all the great things which the Saviour has purchased, the more ardent will be the pursuit of them. The stronger the hope of heaven, the weaker will be the love of earth; till having obtained the "full assurance of hope," we shall long "to depart, and be with Christ;" and the soul by anticipation having long entered heaven, the dark waters of Jordan will be scarcely seen from the glory of the shore beyond; and when called to pass them, having already experienced that the Saviour has indeed "saved to the uttermost," from earthly



A strong scriptural hope n
far more effectually, into god
sin, than any doubts or fear
my reconciled *Father* in Chri
freely, fully forgiven me all
washed my soul from every
blood of His Son? Does the
me? and has he been interc
every day, and every hour,
me to Himself by the gentle,
leadings of His divine Spi
finally subdue *all* sin in my
sent me “without spot,” befo

of his life most stamped with dark ingratitude and sin; and what will be the result? the greatest astonishment will possess him at the surpassing goodness of God, and the most earnest desires will be felt in the soul to dedicate the remainder of his life, his thoughts, his words, and actions to that Saviour, whose compassionate eye followed him in all his wanderings, and whose gracious and all-powerful hand extricated him from so many snares. Would this be the effect of an hour passed in communion with doubts and fears? Oh! no; they weaken, they chill the soul, but they do not fill it with the love of God. The Lord exactly knows how the disease of sin must be cured, and we should implicitly follow His remedies. If we were suffering from a disorder which required the knife, and also cordials to be administered, and were attended by men of acknowledged skill, we should not obediently submit to the

be afraid of presumption, when
has graciously commanded us
with a strong, and bright, and
hope? They would willingly
the sharpest and most painful pro
they tremble to take the bless
held to their lips. Yet without
hope, how can we be filled with
of praise and thanksgiving, w
joined us? How can we "co
with songs and everlasting joy
trembling fitful, hope give us
this? And yet, this is the man
the ransomed of the Lord
accomplish their pilgrimage

— "h

“ Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted.” And should we, the objects of all this goodness, be afraid to rejoice with them? No! may the description given by the divine Spirit of those who accept the great salvation offered them, apply to us: “ for ye shall *go out* with *joy*, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” And thus, we shall be brought to take our places in the “ house ” of Christ, “ if we hold fast the confidence and the *rejoicing* of the *hope* firm unto the end.”

But many other dear Christians think, that this bright and comforting hope is most desirable, and should be attained, and they sigh when they look at those who are enjoying it, while they are themselves destitute of it; but they consider it an

it is so, and we must all
ledge that every blessing
feeling comes from God;
cause (generally speaking
selves, when we do not ob
We look upon it as a pr
stowed upon us, instead o
most diligently sought,
which we must most caref
a great mistake to suppos
on *sensible* comfort. Dav
wise, when in the absence
he exclaimed, "In God
rejoice, in the Lord's *wo*
me." And if we follow
and often recalled the


strained to praise and rejoice, though in the absence of what many persons call sensible comfort. It is also a mistake to suppose that hope is a spiritual gift which is communicated to the soul in a peculiar manner ; it must be sought as other graces of the Spirit, and it will be received as other blessings, through the diligent use of the appointed means of grace. Have we sought it in this manner ? Of three very important duties it is placed first, because its influence would materially assist in the fulfilment of the others.* “Rejoice in hope; be patient in tribulation; continue instant in prayer.” Now, we all acknowledge the imperative necessity of the two latter duties. We watch, and strive against murmuring, repining, discontented thoughts; and against everything that would lead to them. And when our great tempter suggests them we will not listen to him, knowing that the admission of such thoughts would entirely

* Romans xii, 12.




we dwell on all those things which
culated to strengthen patience
meditations which confirm us in
that trials are good for us; then
directed by a hand of infinite love
surely have a blessed end, if we
our own resistance frustrate this
effect. And thus the soul is directed
be submissive to the will of God,
is received to be "patient in trial."
In the same manner with respect
duty of prayer, we feel it to be
needful to be on our guard against
things which would destroy the
prayer. We feel that we must not
to vain and worldly imaginations.

to stir up the spirit of supplication within us, by those considerations which are best calculated to lead us with earnestness to the mercy seat. Now do we act thus with regard to the first duty, with regard to hope? Do we watch with the same anxiety and diligence against every desponding, doubting thought? do we with the same quickness repel every dark view that Satan may present to us? And these pictures will be powerful and frequent, for the fallen spirit has nothing to do with the rich blessing of hope, and, consequently, his attacks upon it will be peculiarly bitter. Do we also industriously try to cherish and strengthen hope by all those meditations which are likely to increase it and give it brightness?—or, do we suffer our unbelieving, ungrateful, desponding hearts, and our great adversary, to suggest what they like to us, on this subject? Do we listen without interruption to all their arguments, follow out all their reasonings, and even think it a duty, to hold



nearer to God? do we find stronger in resisting sin? do we find of earth diminished, and the love increased? I think not. A friend almost considered it right and in a doubting, trembling, fear: yet, after reading the Scripture, a far different one set inculcated. At length a conviction the absolute *duty* of hope took possession of my mind. There was however no additional feeling—there was no additional comfort communicated—the same views were held up as before the Prince of Darkness,—the same

not looked at: the soul intently gazed on brighter scenes. Early in the morning the thought was *grasped* on waking,—God is *my* Father, Christ is *my* Saviour,—and the Holy Spirit will be with me this day to instruct and sanctify my soul. To all the many thoughts that arose to check and darken this feeling, the same answer was returned, “I *will* not listen to you for a moment.” Throughout the whole day the same comforting views were industriously sought: every little word of admonition that came seasonably to the mind, whether by book or conversation, was received as a confirmation of the blessed truth, that God loved the soul, and would constantly watch over and instruct it, until it should be brought to glory. Every trial was viewed in the same light, and even when sin, for awhile unhappily triumphed, in causing any ebullition of unholy tempers, the soul tried firmly to secure the same comforting truths; though then, Satan renewed with



neavenly ~~and~~,
worthy of the spirit of adoption, un
of "its high calling," and earnest
plicated for more grace. By degree
was so difficult, became more easy:
and happy views became habitual,—
Prince of Darkness diminished the s
when he found it to be vain. My
experience, I think, would be th
rience of all who made the same a

There is something very strikin
repetition of the miracle of fee
multitude: it is related by t
gelists, with much attention. W
intended to strengthen our beli
Lord's gracious declaration, '
" — as hungeri

his trust in the Lord shall be made fat." Every thing does it good, every thing seems to nourish it; and seeking cause to hope yet more, it enters into the meaning of those gracious words, "they that have gathered it, shall eat it, and praise the Lord."

Our Lord Jesus Christ is set before us as a perfect pattern, which we are carefully to seek to imitate. And what made our Lord despise the shame of the cross, and so patiently endure its anguish ? "A strong, and bright hope of the joy that was set before him. We must earnestly, prayerfully, perseveringly, seek the same hope, and we shall taste the joy of the prophet, when he exclaimed, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord ; my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. For, as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as

even thoughts, there must be love, warm, sympathising, and considerate love. Oh ! when we have complained of the dryness of our souls, it has often been because this channel for God's grace and especial comforts to descend into, the soul has been choked by selfishness, or unkind feelings, and we have not endeavoured to remove this impediment. How often, when we have sighed, and felt depressed, after long seasons of retirement, because the spirit has remained as dull as ever, should we have "mounted up on the eagle wings" of hope and joy, had we denied ourselves some little pleasure, or some arrangement of time, in order (for our Saviour's sake), to increase the comfort or satisfaction of those around, and thus to increase in ourselves, and others the spirit of love. It is these little things which bind hearts together ; and it is in obeying the spirit of our Lord's commands in these little things, that we meet frequently with that grace



which our Lord delivered his command, “to love;” and reflect on the example He set us of self-denial, not seeking His own comfort, or succour, when others needed His assistance, but immediately coming forth to help them, when they intruded upon his devotion. In this manner, we must feel,—that in the way we so likely to obtain the blessing; as by seeking to promote the good of others; and in no way can we so easily attain this end, as by increasing in the love of ourselves, the spirit of Christian

Another reason why we frequ

thoughts to things above; we cannot endure the idea of leaving our apartment without obtaining some quick spiritual feelings; they are obtained;—and then, they must be improved: and after such an exhausting exercise, in what state of vigour is the soul for the active self-denying duties of the day? We need not cease from prayer when we leave the closet; for, prayer

Is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of the eye,
When none but God is near!

Can we wonder, after so weakening a process, that we should be again painfully dull when the next season of devotion comes? Oh! the secret of an elevated happy mind, is to be ever holding communion with God in the heart:—but,—not on the knees.

It has appeared to me, also, that we do not make that edifying and comforting

need, I think we should be much strengthened in trial, and comfort in sorrow. For instance, are we in instances of painful anxiety? Let us meditate on those texts which exhort to calm, and entire *trust* in God, and the blessed promises annexed to such a trust and I think we shall soon see the full meaning of those beautiful promises. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."


Are we tempted to despond? Let us prayerfully dwell on all the texts related to excite and strengthen hope.

pressed and disheartened by the struggles of indwelling sin? Let us seek those assurances of final victory, and of present help, so abundantly made to us through Christ. This way of reading the Scriptures would greatly support our faith, and we should find, that a "word" read "in season how good is it."

We have the most abundant encouragement to pray for hope. "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to His will, he heareth us, and if we know that he hear us, we know that he have the petitions that we desired of Him." Now, "this is the WILL OF GOD, even your sanctification," and as a Scriptural hope has a very sanctifying influence, in praying for it, you are praying according to the *will of God*, and are therefore *sure* to be heard. "Ask, that ye *may receive*, that your joy may be full," are our Lord's own words.

mies in the spirit of Jehoshaphat
people, when they heard that the
multitude were come up again
beyond the sea." And Jud
themselves together, to ask
the Lord: even out of all the cities
they came to seek the Lord
in the midst of this immense congregation.
Jehoshaphat stood forth, and solemnly
commended himself and his
people to the protection of the Lord,
reminding the Lord of all his good
promises, and concluding his prayer
with these words, "Oh! we
have no might against this great


children !” What a picture of danger, distress, and earnest supplication ! A prophet encourages them in the name of the Lord. “ Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude ; for the battle is not yours but God’s.” They implicitly believed the gracious message ; they confidently expected the promised help and deliverance, and, in the full assurance of *hope*, they immediately began praising and extolling their God, though the mighty host which caused their fear, was stretched in all its strength, and power in the valley. Early the next morning, they sallied forth to the battle field, when the king addressed his people in a few emphatic words ; “ Hear O Judah ; *believe* in the Lord your God, *so* shall ye be *established* ; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper.” And how did they go down to meet this fearful array of powerful enemies ? They “ praised the beauty of



when "they looked into the
behold, they were dead bodies
the earth, and none escaped."
we but meet, and engage o
this simple joyful confidence
founded on the unerring wo
living God, we should often r
the conflict as the host of J
great rejoicing, and with much


Oh ! how does a bright scrip
strengthen in the hour of di
light up the chamber of death !
instances must occur to us, but
peculiarly present to my memor

with one, who, by his dissipated conduct, and senseless extravagance, soon brought her to poverty. The trial of seeing his beloved child so distressed brought on a temporary aberration of mind in her father, whom she devotedly loved; and the constant and intense grief she felt on his account, and for her destitute children, sowed the seeds of a cancer, which soon began to manifest itself. These various afflictions had been blessed to her soul; for many years she had been humbly seeking her God, and he comforted her with a strong and bright hope. She felt it to be her duty to submit to the painful operation of having the part affected cut off: but when they offered to hold her during the trying period, she gently refused, and calmly added, "*the Lord* will support me." After a short time the cancer again showed itself, causing, as usual, intense suffering. She had in the former part of her sickness, attended the ministry of one,



...
sweetly told, that his was not
sympathy of the world, but flow
heart filled with the love of C
anxious like his blessed Master
every wounded spirit with the
Saviour's love. Oh with what
ing zeal has he visited the lone
of the sick and dying sinner ! V
simplicity, and fervour, has he
the afflicted man to Him, who
support and cheer him on his b
guishing, and light up the gloo
ber with a ray from heaven. H
soul been pained, as the cold
almost averted face too plainly

and when at last the warm, welcome, upraised eye, spoke of better feeling, with what redoubled earnestness and care did he guide the afflicted one, till he „clasped the cross, and was supported there.” And when his hope grew “bright and brighter still, as nearer death approached,” when the sick man grasped his hand, and said, “the peace of God was in his heart,” oh! with what tears of gratitude and love, with what humble and heartfelt joy did he pour forth his soul in thanksgiving and praise. To this dear minister of God she sent—she had been greatly comforted by his ministrations; and as her sufferings increased, she had still more need of comfort. He gladly obeyed the summons, and as his visit gave her consolation, in the overflowings of his loving heart, he promised her that comfort weekly, till comfort should be no longer necessary, till faith should be exchanged for sight. This promise was faithfully kept, though as she



was privileged to be present
those visits of love; never
forgotten! My first I rem
all within the house was glo
all spoke of ruined fortune
heart oppressed with melanc
to the sick chamber: care
round the bed, I intently
sufferer there! Traces of be
visible in her countenance;
features were sharpened by p
row. Before her, supported
lay the swollen, unsightly,
arm of suffering. There wa
sion of perfect peace,—which

with the soul? there has been no suffering there I trust." A gleam of heavenly light passed across her face, as she replied, "All peace, all comfort; no cloud overshadows that." Soon after a paroxysm of extreme pain came on, which for the instant disturbed her intellect, and the flush of anguish suffused her face. I shall never forget the countenance of that dear minister of God, during this trying interval: with tearful eyes he gazed upon the sufferer as if she had been his child, then clasped his hands, and raised the tearful eye to heaven, as he fervently implored help for the afflicted one. The pain subsided—the mind returned—and peace again overspread her face. She turned to those around, and gently said, "Thank God; I can *again* praise Him!"—On leaving this chamber of heavenly peace, lighted up as it was with a bright and glorious *hope* "full of immortality," how different were the feelings, from those experienced on entering it. How

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